

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

EDWARD ARNOLD'S NEW VOLUME,
THE SECRET OF DEATH (from the Sanscrit). With
some collected poems. By EDWIN ARNOLD, M. A.
16mo., pp. 252. Roberts Brothers.

In the dedication of this volume to his daughter
Mr. Arnold frankly expresses an assurance that his
Verse shall henceforth live
On lips to be, in hearts as yet unfeeling,
Because the world's best will some day give—
When Faith and Doubt are friends at some far meeting—
Late praise to him who dreamed it.

This furnishes the key to all his serious poetical
purpose, which is to interpret and command to us
the theological and philosophical speculations of
the mysterious East in whose hoary literature he
has studied profoundly. It was one of the dis-
tinguishing notes of his "Light of Asia" that it
presented the spirit of Oriental thought not as it
appeared to the European intelligence, but as it im-
pressed itself upon the Hindoo; and in "The
Secret of Death" this sympathetic realization of
the Asiatic cast of mind is even more clearly mani-
fest; it transcends poetical appreciation, and at
least approaches very close to intellectual ascent.
Mr. Arnold's work therefore has a direct bearing
upon that curious tendency of contemporary
liberalism which, in various developments, from
the scientific theism of Professor Müller even down
to the mystical antics of Colonel Olcott, shows an
anxiety to reach an accommodation with Brah-
manism and Buddhism by getting rid of everything
peculiar to Christianity.

Saleh: us han va Javasra—The scroll
Commenceth thus! Sarvavedandasandhan—
Which is interpreted: "For hope of heaven
All that had, Javasra's great son
Gave to the poor."

Priest. 'Tis so!

Tasya ha nám
Putra as Nachiketas: "and of him
Straddh' avśeṣa": When the gifts were brought,
Strong illus pty seized the young man's heart."
(With gifts, and wherefore, Putra)

EDITOR. Yeas! the scroll
Speaker of one who saw Death face to face
And questioned Death and freed dread Yama's lips
Learned much of life and death; and—dead—
Die he never and ever for. Read
This holy scripture on ward! I will still
Recite the comment.

Dakshināśū Sir!
Kumāra sūtanī bhāyanā
Straddh' avśeṣa: "When the gifts were brought,
Strong illus pty seized the young man's heart."
(With gifts, and wherefore, Putra)

Poetry and linguistics do not mix well. If Mr. Arnold is writing for the benefit of a class of pupils in Sanscrit, we can understand his method; but if he is writing poetry for the less profound public, he has made a serious mistake. All high class poetry can be read aloud with pleasure, and it will fill the ear with melody and the mind with rare and noble thought. "The Secret of Death" cannot be read aloud except by a small number of the learned. The Sanscrit lines and phrases which are freely introduced throughout two-thirds of the poem destroy the music therefore, because the reader must either stumble at them or skip them, while they add nothing to the sense, because they are immediately translated. The legend is of Nachiketas, the son of Gautama, who, having obtained the promise of three boons from Yama, god of Death, asks of the divinity knowledge of the great problems of existence. In the answer to these inquiries we have an exposition of the Brahmanical system of pantheism to which the Upansishads are largely devoted. If we cannot find in this speculation the simplicity and insight, still less the consoling hope and the lofty morality, which the poet admires we can at all events value the beauty and compactness of phrase, the felicity of imagery, and the sustained dignity of tone in which the strange verse of the old world is rehearsed by this accomplished interpreter. The majestic calm which broods over the depths of the Pundit's philosophy, and the slow lingering richness of the poetry of a splendid and venerable antiquity, are reproduced with marvellous skill. It will be interesting to compare Mr. Arnold's rendering of a well-known passage with the famous "Brahma" of Emerson. Mr. Arnold begins with four lines of Sanscrit, which we omit, and then construes the text as follows:

"If he that stayeth thinks 'I say'—then both
Know he doth, thinks 'I am'—then both
Know not aright! That which was life in each
Cannot be static, nor is it."

The untouched Soul,
Greater than all the worlds because the worlds
By its width; smaller than subtleties
Of things minutest; last of infinites,
Sits in the hollow heart of all that lives!
Whose hate had death and death; and fear,
Dies in the quiet light of virtue;
Eternal, safe, majestic—he soul!

"Beating, it ranges everywhere I asleep,
Roams the world, unsleeping; I who save I,
Know that divine spirit, as it is,
Glad beyond joy, existing outside life!

"Beholding it in bodies helpless,
Amid impermanency permanent,
Embracing all things, yet 'tis the midst of all,
The mind, enlightened, casts its grief away!

"It is not to be known by knowledge! man
Woteth it not by wisdom! learning vast
Hails short of it! Only by soul itself
Is soul perished when the soul wills it so!

The sun no light gave its own light to show
Itself unto itself!

"None compasseth
Joy whi is not wholly caused from sin,
Who dwells not self-controlled, self-centred—calm,
Lord of himself! It is not gotten else!

Brahma hath it not to give!

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